



THE BEGINNINGS!

The Book of Genesis

Faith that Changes Me!

Genesis 32:1-32

Message #34 of 50 – S933

Sermon given on February 28, 2021

@ Calvary Chapel French Valley, Murrieta, CA



Sunday Morning Service

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Faith that Changes Me!

Genesis 32:1-32

Opening Comments

- Good morning – we will be in **Genesis 32**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- It has been said, “God loves you exactly the way you are – but He loves you too much to let you stay that way!”
- One of the surest signs that someone has had a true encounter with the living God is that they are changed by that encounter
- And not just changed **Romans 8:29**

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

- True faith in Jesus will cause you to continually change to be more like Jesus Christ
- For some people, the process of sanctification seems effortless, painless, fun
- But for others, it is a struggle, a fight, a wrestling match with God
- In today’s text Jacob is going to get into a wrestling match
- And that encounter changes him for the rest of his life
- God wants to change us for His glory and our good so that we can live the abundant life and be a blessing to others
- You can’t stay the same as you are AND live the abundant life
- Let’s pray and ask the Holy Spirit to want to change to be like Jesus
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Faith that Changes Me!**
 - Chapter 31 ended with Jacob fleeing from Laban
 - Chapter 32 picks up as Jacob approaching Canaan
 - **Genesis 32:1-2**
 - ‘Mahanaim’ = 2 hosts or camps
 - Jacob saw angels as he was leaving Canaan 20 years earlier
 - Should have been source of great encouragement **Romans 8:31**
- What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?**

- Reminds Jacob of God's promise and assures him of God's acceptance.
 - Angels are meant to reassure Jacob – God promised **Genesis 28:15** **Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.**
 - God would be there as he faces his past - his mistakes with Esau
 - Jacob sends messengers to Esau
 - **Genesis 32:3-5**
 - Humbly tells Esau – coming home and rich
 - Jacob gets an unsettling response
 - **Genesis 32:6**
 - Esau is coming with a small army – what does it mean?
 - **Genesis 32:7-8**
 - From a human perspective we can understand why Jacob is afraid and distressed.
 - But Jacob doesn't know why Esau is coming with four hundred men.
 - Also, the 'angels of God' just met him as he came into the land.
 - Jacob's faith is still growing.
 - It is not a lack of faith to do what is prudent based on the circumstances, but it is if your motivation is fear.
 - Trusting God does not mean we don't prepare for potential dangers.
 - **Genesis 32:9-12**
 - Longest prayer recorded in Genesis
 - First prayer of Jacob for God's help
 - Reminds God of His promises & character – also reminding himself
 - That is a good model to follow
 - Unfortunately, this is a prayer of desperation, not confidence **Warren Wiersbe**
- The will of God will never lead us where the power of God can't protect us and provide for us.**
- Will of God was for Jacob to return
 - During the night he has an idea
 - **Genesis 32:13-15**
 - 580 animals – gift fit for a king
 - Comes up with a scheme to increase impact of gift
 - **Genesis 32:16-21**

- Five successful waves of the gift - All meant to appease his brother
- Jacob still can't sleep
- **Genesis 32:22-23**
- Appears to be selfless act to protect them - Leaves him all alone
- Just where he needed to be to have a radical experience with God
- Alone in a dark, strange place - Can't go back, afraid to go forward
- Then some guy appears from the darkness
- **Genesis 32:24**
- Martin Luther refers to this passage - one of the most obscure in OT
- Why are they wrestling? Who initiated the wrestling match?
- Who is this Man? Capitalization of the 'Man' gives us a clue
- **Genesis 32:25**
- Wrestle for hours – Jacob doesn't give in
- Man simply touches Jacob's hip – out of joint
- This touch crippled Jacob – limped for rest of life
- Jacob still not letting go
- **Genesis 32:26**
- Man says, 'Let Me go' – Jacob appears to demand a blessing
- Turn to **Hosea 12**
- Something changed in Jacob – touch – hip out of joint
- Requesting blessing = implies that the other is superior
- Hosea records the emotion of this:
- **Hosea 12:2-6**
- Jacob goes from wrestling to clinging
- Not demanding but pleading
- Man that Jacob wrestled with is the pre-incarnate Christ
- **Genesis 32:27**
- Begs for blessing – instead made to admit weakness
- Up to this point, Jacob pretty self-sufficient
- Even within God's promises – took actions to ensure
- Felt that God's promises could only happen with his help
- Man wrestled with Jacob to get him to yield
- Jacob wouldn't yield – with touch – Jesus broke his strength
- Jacob immediately recognized Man as the LORD

- Jacob changed – Lord acknowledges that with name change
- **Genesis 32:28**
- Jacob about to enter Promised Land
- God would not let him enter as Jacob - Had to make a change in his heart first - Israel = God strives or struggles
- God made promises to Jacob – appropriated by faith
- We have been promised things as well **John 10:10b**
I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.
- We have been promised a good life - now
- Few people actually enter into that life
- Because something needs to change in them first
- God won't let you enter the abundant until it changes
- Jacob had to face the fact – schemer, and conniver
- Depended on his own abilities – self-sufficient
- Can't enter as self-sufficient – God-dependent
- God crippled him to remind Jacob – depend on God
- From this time on, see a change in Jacob
- Not perfect – but walking more in faith daily
- **Genesis 32:29-31**
- Jacob has a radical encounter with God
- Sees God face-to-face – it changes him
- Every encounter with God in our life will change us
- Narrator inserts commentary
- **Genesis 32:32**
- Jacob wrestled with God - More accurately: God wrestled with Jacob
- Came to him before entering Promised Land
- Israel was to be father of 12 tribes
- God's Chosen People – blessing to nations
- Jacob/Israel was not ready for that role
- God came to wrestle with him to prepare him
- Jacob would have lived in Canaan same as Padan Aram
- Many people have the same problem as Jacob
- They believe that Jesus came to give them abundant life
- Then they try to enter that life and live as they always have
- God says, 'No you won't!' – He won't let them

- You will do what comes natural to you
- God doesn't want us to do what comes naturally
- God is preparing us for the Promised Life
- Wrestling with grandson Harvey – let them wrestle me
- Any time – I could pin them
- That was Jesus' purpose in wrestling Jacob
- At any time could have pinned Jacob
- Wanted him to yield – wouldn't – touched/crippled
- Three things we need to enter Promised Life
- **Entering Promised Life**
- First - **Yield** – we must yield to God
- To recognize His superiority and authority
- He is God and if you are a Christian – your God
- He expects to be God in your life
- If there is an area not yielded – He will wrestle you for it - 2

Chronicles 30:8

Now do not be stiff-necked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to the LORD; and enter His sanctuary, which He has sanctified forever, and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of His wrath may turn away from you.

- God loves you too much – to let you stay the way you are
- What are you hanging on to: self-sufficiency, pride, anger, arrogance, envy, jealousy, fear, resentment
- Or some sin: lying, gossip, stealing, drugs, alcohol, pornography, immorality, adultery
- Yield it to the Lord - If you don't – He will start touching/crippling
- Rest of your life will be marked by that 'hip out of joint'
- Because Jacob didn't yield to Jesus He limped for the rest of his life
- Can't win wrestling match with God
- Second - **See** – see Lord for who He is
- We base our life on what we know about God
- Problem is – don't know enough **1 Corinthians 13:12**

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

- Should be our life's passion to know Christ
- Never be satisfied with your knowledge of God – hunger and thirst for more of God

- Never stop seeking to know Christ more fully
- God gave us three things to help with that
- God's Spirit – moment we yield, given Holy Spirit
- God's Word, Bible
- God's people – they help us to know Christ and yield to Him
- Third - **Change** – we must change to live the abundant life
- God has a goal for all of our lives **2 Corinthians 3:18**
But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.
- God is transforming us to the image of Christ
- Some people wrestle with God because they believe that changing moves them away from a good life
- In reality, God wants to change so that you are able to live the good life that Jesus died to give you and promised you
- And that is true whether you have been in the faith for fifty years or fifty minutes
- If you want a good life – a life that glorifies God, blesses others, and grows faith
- Yield as much of your life as you are able to God
- See Jesus for who He is and get to know Him better
- And let the change that God desires in you happen – don't fight it
- And you will live the abundant life – regardless of what the world is doing around you
- **Invitation/Prayer!**
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